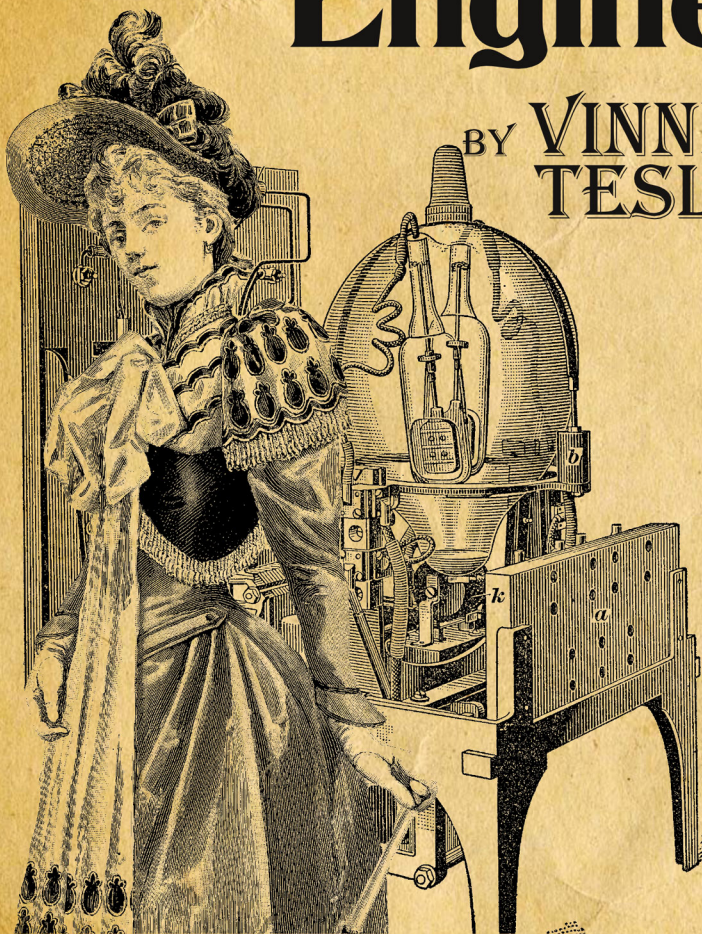


The Ontological Engine

BY VINNIE
TESLA



A pornographic comedy of MAD SCIENCE,
MANNERS, and AMOROUS MOLLUSCS

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by Vinnie Tesla

Circlet Press, Inc.
Cambridge, MA

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ISBN 978-1-61390-177-9

Circlet Press, Inc.
39 Hurlbut Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

www.circlet.com

This electronic version was produced in-house at Circlet Press.

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The Ontological Engine, or, The Modern Leda

It is imperative that I make this utterly clear from the start: my motives in the affair of Miss Pertwee were the very highest. Desire for personal gain, worldly fame for the name of Daedalus Tesla, or selfish pleasure of any sort were absent from my mind at all junctures. I hope that my setting down the bare facts of the case will suffice to clarify that the dreadful outcome which resulted arose despite the noblest intentions on my part and could never have been reasonably foreseen.

My troubles began when I had been a Fellow of ---- College, Cambridge, for several years. In retrospect, it is clear that I was already beginning to tire of the position. A considerable family income left me free of the need for remunerative work, but I had initially hoped, foolishly, that the storied intellects of that renowned College would prove a congenial atmosphere for the life of the mind. How comically naive that seems to me now!

The laboratory facilities with which the college had provided me were, I suppose, adequate in size, though my budget was laughably small, given the importance of the work I was doing.

Nonetheless, certain of my researches demanded rather more remoteness from the prying eyes of the jealous and the small-minded than was afforded by my official accommodations. By great good fortune, I had come to be aware of a disused storage attic in ----- House and had managed to assemble an entirely adequate facility there for my more sensitive researches, with very few people the wiser for it.

The eventful May afternoon I propose to describe was a Wednesday, and being so, Mrs. Mathilde Hargreaves, wife of the Head of the College, was providing me with her inimitable

assistance for the day's researches--my most ambitious exploration of ontological forces to date.

With trembling fingers, she disrobed, eager as always to aid in the cause of Science. I guided her to the padded collection platform, placed the metal circlet--which I had designed to channel the energies she produced so copiously--upon her head, and strapped her, face down, to the cushioned stand.

Once I had selected a suitable birch bundle, we commenced with the day's activities. The flagellation, oftentimes the highlight of our Wednesday research sessions, was that day the merest prelude. I did not even bother to activate the collection circuit as I briskly brought her wriggling posterior to a pleasingly roseate glow.

Coming around her, I found that the exercise had brought colour to her face as well, her dark eyes now moist and sparkling. When I inquired whether she was ready for the next phase of our experiment, she nodded most avidly.

It was now time to test my newly-augmented Electrick Vibratorium. When I flipped the switch, a great throbbing hum suffused the room. Mrs. Hargreaves jumped and squirmed about despite the lack of contact. I reached between her limbs and she ground her pubis against my hand most avidly, bedewing my knuckles with the fluids of her ardour. I pressed the swollen labia apart, exposing her clitoris, and pressed the buzzing pad of the Vibratorium against it, eliciting a long groan of delight from the hot-blooded woman. With some little effort, I subdued her motions sufficiently to strap the Vibratorium in place and then took my place at the control panel I had assembled.

I activated the Amatory Capacitors, and a crackling noise filled the air. It joined in pleasing counterpoint to the Vibratorium's hum and Mrs. Hargreaves's groans and gasps as my Ontological Engine woke to life, powered by the trickle of Vital Energies she was emitting.

We were entering a phase of the project that demanded the utmost care and patience. I was purposing to embark on the harnessing of ontological forces on an unprecedented scale--any error could derail the undertaking or render it gravely perilous.

My ears were to guide my labours of this time as much as my eyes. As Mrs. Hargreaves' cries rose in pitch and volume, they were joined by an acceleration in the crackling from the Ontological Engine. I twisted a knob, cutting power to the Vibratorium, and a note of dismay entered Mrs. Hargreaves's voice.

"Oh, pray, Mr. Tesla! Do not pause--I was so very close!"

"All in good time, dear lady," I assured her. "The day is yet young."

Impatiently, she struggled with her bonds, striving to press herself more firmly against the Vibratorium. Whistling merrily, I once more looked over the Engine's connections and switches, the lusty woman's desperate moans sweet music to my ears.

Arrayed on the work-table before me was a divers array of exotic materials from the Americas, each singularly rich, according to my instruments, in Vital Fluid.

Long did I ply that dial, ever and again raising Mrs. Hargreaves's pleasure to the utmost, then denying her the release she so urgently craved, while the crackling of the Ontological Engine, and its unearthly blue glow, rose and fell with the lady's excitement.

"I think things may be nearly in readiness," I told the writhing woman at last, but the observation was met merely with gasps as she strove to regain her breath.

"Do you think you would like to spend now?" I inquired.

At this she found breath. "Oh, yes, yes! I cannot abide another moment of this abominable teasing!"

I had made something of a study of this woman's particular tastes, and I possessed a smattering of knowledge of how to maximize her excitement, and thus her output of Vital Fluids.

"Beg," I said coldly.

"Oh, pray, Mr. Tesla," she gasped, "I beg of you, allow me to spend. Oh, I crave it so! I shall be your servant in all things, if only you permit it!"

Not particularly ingenious, but one must make allowances for circumstance. Slowly, slowly, I began to turn the dial upward.

Moans gave way to cries, cries to shrieks. Much of my attention was consumed with adjustments to the Ontological Engine as I made ready to marshal its forces to best effect.

The moment of Mrs. Hargreaves's maximum pleasure came, and the room was suffused with a flickering blue light. I threw the switch. The Ontological Engine came fully to life, throwing its powers on the arrayed materials. Small vortices of ontological energies formed, drifting away from the table before dissipating into the air. One struck a potted ficus by the window, which opened golden-slitted eyes and watched the proceedings intently; another brushed the sleeve of my coat, where good brown Irish tweed blushed a vulgar scarlet, turning to crushed velvet for a few seconds before fading to tweed once more.

My attention to these processes was interrupted by a splintering bang as the locked door to the storage room was forced open.

"Mathilde!" Professor Hargreaves's bellow was as unmistakable as it was unwelcome.

"Fear not, darling! I am here to rescue you!" he cried out.

On the work-table, my materials were merging, taking on new forms, new aspects. On the Collection Stand, Mrs. Hargreaves was still trembling violently against the Vibratorium; I suspect that her cries had covered the arrival of her spouse and would-be rescuer, such that she remained blissfully unaware of his arrival.

"As for you, Tesla, you foul beast," Hargreaves continued, gathering rhetorical momentum, "it's the gallows for you now! Criminal! Rapist!"

"Do you mind, Hargreaves?" I said. "I'm a bit busy at the moment. Could we perhaps discuss this at another time?"

Hargreaves was undeterred. "Charlatan!" he persisted. "Mountebank!"

I whirled on him in a fury. "You dare--?" I began. But the reckless oaf was charging me like a bull. Before I could defend

myself from this unprovoked assault, he struck, and the two of us were tumbling against my control panel, bringing it to the ground with a monstrous clatter. Inertia carried us backward, until a cable caught my foot, and I went sprawling to the floor. Hargreaves, however, ran up against the work-table, his head falling into the beam of blue light cast upon it.

In my attempts to free myself from the cable, I detached the engine from the amatory collector, and the light faded.

I stood, and ascertaining my parts to be largely undamaged, looked about. In the aftermath of the engine's radiance, I could make out naught but vague shapes in the storeroom's gloom. I strode to a window and threw open the blinds, allowing the daylight to stream in, revealing a tableau that shall remain always in my memory.

Nearest me, the ficus shielded its lambent eyes from the sudden glare with two furry grey paws, dragging itself away from the window with another four such.

On the Collection Stand, Mrs. Hargreaves had at last recovered sufficiently from her massive climax to become somewhat cognizant of the changes in her surroundings, constrained though she was by the straps that yet held her in place. "Augustus?" she said, looking in confusion at her husband.

For his part, he sat on the floor, mouth agape, feeling tentatively with his pudgy hands at the pair of incongruously handsome antlers which now sprouted proudly from his broad, gleaming forehead, rendering his marital status all too visible.

Beside him, on the work-table that had previously supported naught but my inert ingredients, three tiny creatures gurgled and squawked. Judging the day's experiment to be, if not complete, then at least terminated, I gathered the creatures on the work-table to my bosom and made my exit, leaving the Hargreaveses to discuss the day's events amongst themselves.

* * * *

Within a month of the incident, I had been removed from

the faculty on grounds, according to the Deanery, of "gross immorality." I might say rather "failure to defer adequately to the bloated egos and withered, timid intellects of the college's Lords High Poo-Bah," but I grant that the former phrase is at least more concise and arresting.

The whole business was, to be sure, unfortunate, and not unmarked by errors of both analysis and judgment on my part. Nonetheless, Hargreaves had previously scoffed at my "ludicrous assertions" with regard to the power of ontological fields, and his fate had more than a whiff about it of poetic justice.

I rather fancy it was the validation of my theories, which he had, in such extravagant and unequivocal terms, derided that rankled with him more than the more mundane humiliations attendant thereon.

I feel compelled to add that, in contrast to her husband's petty acrimony, Mrs. Hargreaves's refusal to press charges betrayed her own excellent breeding and fine character.

As for the other issue of my experiment, my feelings were even more mixed. My calculations had led me to believe that the outcome of the day's work might be some fabulous avatar of lasciviousness, mighty entities capable of--somehow--gathering ever-greater quantities of Vital Fluids, enabling ever-greater feats of ontological engineering.

Instead, at the end of the day's debacle, I was confronted with three mewling, gurgling wee creatures, patchily covered in fine down. Nonetheless, they were a concrete and exotic trophy of my mastery of ontological forces, and it seemed to me that they might well be of some practical value someday, though in what manner, I could scarce imagine.

Upon my ejection from the faculty, I had little choice but to return to the ancestral manse, and set about to remake myself, at least to the eyes of the world, as a reasonably unremarkable country squire, so as not to draw further unwelcome attention for my researches. My pets grew rapidly in the bracing country air, and, in less than a year, had reached nearly their ultimate proportions.

As they figure prominently in the tale before us, it would

behoove me to describe them now. Webbed-footed, winged, and long-necked, their avian ancestry must needs be the first aspect that strikes any viewer. Another glance, however, and the impression is cast askew, for the body, neck, and head are not of any bird, but instead resemble that giant clam of the Pacific known as the "Geoduck." Their siphons, located where one might expect the bird's head and neck, serve for them as organs of consumption and generation, and despite the apparently featureless end, they hear and see adequately well, understanding speech better than any dog, and at least as well as several valets I can think of.

There is a third point of resemblance that bears noting. Those prehensile siphons, innocent of either hair or feathers, bear an arresting resemblance as well to, to put it indelicately, the biggest, most obscene and wrinkled, semi-tumescent male member imaginable.

Upon my return to Tesla Hall, I assembled as small a domestic staff as seemed consistent with my station in life, but found that, contrary to my fears, maintaining privacy in my affairs from them was no matter at all. To a one, my servants were loath to come near the door to my basement laboratory and were hugely reluctant to do so much as knock upon it, for fear, one supposes, of it coming to life and devouring them. Not that that was entirely outside the realm of possibility, come to think on it.

On the other hand, the forces I had available to work with were pitifully small. A massive coal-fired steam engine, imported at great cost from Liverpool, provided a modest trickle of ontological energies, but the conversions from heat to mechanical force to the ontological realm were heartbreakingly inefficient.

To the extent possible, I gave my ungainly little pets the run of the estate, and found that I had grown rather fond of the creatures. In time, they began taking a distinct interest in the female house servants, a warmth that was sadly unreciprocated, as the members of my staff were uniformly terrified of the harmless little dears.

My life thus proceeded rather drearily for many months as I moved in, made the minimal social rounds of the area, and worked to build a first class laboratory of ontological endeavour.

Then one day, a little more than a year after my taking up country life, I received a visit from a particularly talented former pupil of mine--one Victor Dalrymple, whose company I had always found quite reasonably congenial. He, for his part, was quite unabashed about his admiration for my extraordinary intellectual accomplishments.

"My dear fellow!" he effused to me over our second bottle of sherry. "How aptly you match your namesake: master inventor and artificer!"

There was justice in his words, but the social niceties must be observed.

"Oh, you are too kind, Victor," I demurred. "I am naught but a woolly-headed theoretician. Why, even your mechanical skill is nearly a match for mine."

Victor seemed a bit taken aback by the extravagance of my praise. "Er... thank you," he said at last. Then he leaned in and spoke in hushed tones. "My dear fellow, I just want to you know that I consider the scurrilous charges old Hargreaves leveled against you to be libelous balderdash."

My surprise was unfeigned. "You do?"

"Daedalus, my friend. Anyone who knows you realizes that you are a man of science, not some sordid libertine rogue! Hargreaves is a spiteful ass, and his vague claims that you had 'disfigured' him were the most transparent poppycock. Why, if such a thing had occurred, why would he refuse to specify the nature of the damage done? Frankly, I am convinced that something was wrong with his head!"

I started guiltily. "Whatever do you mean?"

"Brain fever, old boy. The man is a bit cracked, to be blunt. Why, to this day, he refuses to remove his hat, even in church. It is quite the scandal about the old college."

He sat back and took another sip of his sherry. "Clearly, his jealousy of your brilliance eventually got the better of him, and he concocted his absurd fable to smear you!"

My eyes filled with tears at this speech, moved not merely by his display of faith in me, but by the poignant certainty that I could not, at that time, reveal to him the grain of truth in Hargreaves's malicious attacks, that my researches in pursuit of knowledge, in pursuit of human betterment, had once more served to isolate me, to sever me from the happy intercourse of the common run of man. For the first time in months, I was seized by the loneliness of the great, compounded by the prolonged isolation of my rural retreat.

To be a giant in a land of midgets is to be ineluctably isolated, and yet it occurred to me that some relief might be at hand, as well as solutions to certain other of my dilemmas.

"I say, Victor," I ventured, "I hope you will forgive the presumption. I well realize that such labour is vastly below your worldly station, but would you have any interest in assisting me at my researches?"

"My dear friend," he said. "It would be a signal honour!"

* * * *

The days that followed I still remember with distinct pleasure. Victor proved both an eager and an able assistant, turning his hand to tasks both difficult and menial with nearly equal ardour. We were, in many ways, a complimentary pair, my theoretical genius enhanced by his formidable mechanical ingenuity, his rosy complexion and bronze curls a contrast to my swarthier colouring, his buoyant naiveté a welcome tonic to my own bitter awareness of humanity's true nature. Withholding those aspects of my researches for which he was not yet prepared was an inconvenience, to be sure; and exposure to my full arsenal of equipment earned me a fair scattering of interrogative glances as he scrutinized the manacles, the electrodes, the Electrick Vibratorium. I urged him towards discretion as he went about in town, reminding him that there were those who would be eager to steal the secrets of ontological engineering to pervert it to their own selfish or immoral ends, and he pledged himself to perfect silence.

In time, he introduced me to the fruits of what other avenues of invention had recently been cast up into the world, arranging the installation of an Edison Electrick Tele-phone between my parlour and laboratory and bringing along his own collection of the latest modern Daguerreotype machines. Truly, it is an age of wonders we live in!

Victor took wonderfully to the 'ducks, and they to him, nosing about him as he walked through the estate, following him in an orderly little line, poking their siphons inquisitively into every crevice of his constructions.

As our work advanced, he oversaw the purchase of an ever-larger and more modern series of steam engines, which, ravenous and temperamental consumers of coal though they were, proved modest indeed in their supplies of power. One day, in late March, I threw down my tools in frustration. "Dash this cursed temperamental steam engine!" I shouted. "This thing is filthy and inefficient, the coalman's bills are eating me alive, and its output is utterly inadequate to my purposes."

Victor was perplexed. "What source do you propose, then? Water? Wind?"

"Victor, dear friend, it is time to take you into my confidences. The energies that power the Ontological Engine are paltry when generated by mechanical force, but they are emitted copiously by human beings."

His puzzlement only deepened. "Would you have me operating a treadmill, then?"

"You misapprehend my purpose. The Vital Fluids that shall power the Ontological Engine are not the vulgar fruits of manual labor, but the finer emanations of the human spirit! Here. I believe a minor demonstration is in order. Help me prise open this crate."

We set to work with crowbars, and in a moment, we had unpacked the Amatory Condensers I had developed at Cambridge.

"Now, old fellow. Do you recall that one night at FitzSimmons Hall, after the servants had all gone to bed?"

Victor blushed to the roots of his hair. "I don't know what

you... that is to say..."

I smiled. "You and Harry and Professor Lawrence and I had all had entirely too much of that excellent French brandy, and we were discussing zoology."

"I must have forgot--" Victor said.

"Now, now, Victor. You may have forgot, but it's clear your prick has not. It's standing out in your trousers quite proudly. Now do have it out and let me have a look."

Victor's hands clenched together in agitation, and he shifted uncomfortably from side to side. "I say, Daedalus. I mean, that sort of thing is quite all right when one is at University, but...."

"Out with it," I said more firmly.

Whether it was the lascivious memories I had summoned or the months of accustomed obedience to my orders, Victor tremblingly unfastened his breeches and drew out the handsome red cock I remembered so well.

I fell to my knees and took it into my mouth, the soft head swelling against my tongue as I began to exert suction upon it.

"Oh, Daedalus!" he cried, "I don't think I can--I believe I shall--"

"Excellent," I responded, frigging his gleaming length with one hand when he emerged from my mouth. "Be a good lad and don that circlet on the table there."

With a trembling hand, he took the metal band and rested it upon his head. At once a low hum began to emerge from the Ontological Engine, and a faint glow suffused it.

I stood. "Now I must ask you to attend to yourself while I attend to the engine." I guided his own hand to his rampant dart of love and manned the switches of the Ontological Engine.

On the work-table stood a crabapple from my own neglected orchards, a pair of Categorical Condensers trained upon it.

I adjusted the azimuth of materiality and disengaged the Vitality Stabilizers. To my side, Victor presented a wonderfully pleasing sight, his face darkly flushed, his handsome cock

appearing and disappearing as he rapidly worked his hand upon it.

"I shall spend... I shall spend..." he whispered.

"Good. Behold!" I flipped the switch, and the engine's hum rose to a noisy whine. The Condensers cast the crabapple in an unearthly glow. The skin of the fruit swelled, coarsened, paled, till it had clearly become a grape-fruit. Victor groaned, and semen splattered across the work-table, a few drops hitting the grape-fruit, which sprouted eye stalks and four shaggy legs. The transformed crabapple blinked improbably long lashes at us as it looked about. Victor groaned and slumped, his spent cock softening in his hand. The glow of the condensers faded, and the creature on the work-table shrank, shrank, until a single dark orange kumquat stood in place of the impossible entity that had moments before occupied the spot.

"Voila," I said.

Victor composed himself, refastened his breeches, and leaned in to examine the kumquat on the table.

"Careful!" I cautioned him. "It's probably a perfectly ordinary kumquat, but one can't be entirely certain."

Victor prodded at it tentatively, then, when it failed to attack, he hefted it. "It was something quite extraordinary for a moment there."

"Indeed," I said. "The effects of ontological energies remain extremely unpredictable, and at first I had the very devil of a time fixing the more exotic alterations. Something about the masculine vital emanations is apparently unstable. But," I raised an eyebrow, "it turns out that with a suitable female to draw upon...."

Victor stared at me, his eyes widening. "Hargreaves wasn't lying!" he said at last.

I rolled my eyes in frustration. "I wasn't rogering his damned wife!" I said. "There is certainly an element of... indecorousness... to our researches, but the results speak for themselves."

"Results?"

"Three giant Pacific clams, three Argentine Lake Duck

eggs, and, er, a lock of hair from my own head were on the table when the remarkably talented Mrs. Hargreaves attained her climax, and one outcome of the process was--"

"The Geoducks!" Victor exclaimed. Then his eyes sparkled with mischief. "I rather fancied I detected a familial resemblance there. But what feat of jesuitical pedantry was it when you denied rogering Mrs. Hargreaves, Daedalus?"

"You wound me, Victor. I am pledged to Knowledge as my only bride."

Victor drummed his fingers. "Hair-splitting does not become you."

I drew myself to my full height (my eyes still near half a foot below his, I confess). "I do not spend," I pronounced. "Thus, I conserve my Vital Fluids for intellectual pursuits, rather than carnal enjoyment. Celibacy is the Tesla family secret, passed down through the generations."

"Celibacy, passed down through the generations?" Victor asked dryly.

I flushed. "Its efficacy is not disproved by its imperfect application," I muttered.

There was a silence.

"So what do you propose?" Victor said at last.

Here the answer was clear enough. "We require a female," I said.

Victor shrugged. "Easily enough done," he said. "Shall I take the morning train down to London and return on the evening train with a suitable harlot?"

"On the contrary," I answered him. "Such women, of necessity, have cultivated a degree of detachment from their labours that renders them distinctively unsuited to this task. Oh, what I wouldn't give for another Mrs. Hargreaves! She was a great asset to science. Her warm temperament, its ardour only sharpened by a decade of near-celibacy, her exceptional stamina, her magnificent posterior!"

Victor grinned. "Her posterior was an arse-et to science?"

My embarrassment to find that my recollections had momentarily gotten the better of me was considerable. "Her, er,

stability upon the collecting platform was excellent. No danger of her falling off, none indeed."

"So how shall we procure another such?" Victor said, kindly changing the subject. "Perhaps we can make the rounds of the neighbouring estates: 'Pardon me, Madam, but do you find that your spending produces an ample quality of ectoplasmic emanation?'"

"No such inquiry should be necessary, fortunately. I have a cunning plan that should make discerning suitable subjects far simpler." I took a sheet of foolscap and began to sketch my design.

* * * *

A couple of days later, the Erotometer was ready for testing. I pointed the collection trumpet at Victor. "Fix your mind upon a particularly pleasant lascivious recollection, if you would be so kind, old boy."

Victor gazed off into a far corner of the workshop, his eyes unfocused. "I happened to be in town yesterday, when Lady Wollaver arrived to pay the vicar a call. In stepping out of the carriage, she revealed almost her entire right calf, right there in the town square!"

The needle on the Erotometer jumped and held in a slightly elevated position. Success!

But before I could celebrate, the content of Victor's anecdote penetrated my preoccupied mind. "Blast! The vicar! He'll be visiting this afternoon! Damn country life and its infuriating distractions. No time to waste--we must get out of these grimy work clothes and prepare to receive visitors."

* * * *

Reverend Pertwee, the vicar of -----shire, was a tallish, bent man, quite bald, with a long, ever-sniffing nose, thick spectacles of questionable efficaciousness, and a peculiar warble in his speech that I found quite distinctively irritating. With him

on that day was a notably attractive young person who was unfamiliar to me.

"Mr. Tesla *-sniff!*" he addressed me when I stepped out to meet him. "What a pleasure it is to finally visit your charming grounds." He peered myopically about at the weed-choked garden, the unpruned orchard, the vine-covered walls. "Quite handsome *-sniff*. Yes, yes, quite *-sniff* handsome."

"I'm so glad you could make it, along with...?"

My prompt had the desired effect. "Oh! Oh! Yes, yes! *-sniff* Of course! Mr. Tesla, my daughter, Eleanor. Eleanor, this is Mr. Daedalus Tesla." She smiled and curtsied prettily. "Quite the richest man in three counties," the good reverend appended in a whisper so loud it fairly echoed from the manor walls. Eleanor sighed.

"Tesla," the vicar mused. "That's a foreign name, is it not? Hungarian, is it?"

"Serbian," I corrected him. "I'm afraid the -----shire Teslas are a scant three centuries in these parts, having constructed Tesla Hall in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. We are a restless people, and no doubt will be moving on again any century now."

Suddenly, Victor was at my side, a peculiar stunned expression on his visage.

"Reverend Pertwee, Miss Pertwee, allow me to present my assistant, Victor Dalrymple."

"A pleasure, Reverend," Victor murmured vaguely. Then he took one of Eleanor's hands in both of his own. "Good day, Miss Pertwee," he sighed. "I, er, I'm Victor Dalrymple."

"So I've heard," she answered sweetly, and, after a pause, extracted, with some small effort, her hand from his own.

I shall not recount the burdensome and tedious tea that followed. Suffice it to say that at the end of an hour-and-a-half, I knew more about the stomach ailments that the sheep of the local yeomen suffered from than I had expected to learn in my entire lifetime. Eventually, with some effort, I managed to insert a reference to the pressing business that called me and shoo him and his daughter, who had been largely silent, out the door.

I returned to my laboratory to find the Erotometer in ruins--its connectors scorched, the needle hopelessly bent, its glass shattered. My first impulse was to blame my pets, who milled anxiously at the other end of the room, but it soon became clear that it was not a fall or an impact that had done this damage. A quantity of Vital Fluid must have passed through the device too powerful for it to contain.

I shewed the ruins to Victor. "Is it just as you found it?" he asked.

I affirmed that it was.

"Then all we need do is trace the path of the collection trumpet, yes? Here... it points upwards, and towards the northwest corner of the room. So if nothing entered the laboratory in the interim, it would be picking up emanations from the sitting room, just by the fireplace."

"Absurd," I said. "No-one was in that side of the room but that milk-and-water daughter of the Vicar's. That meek little girl couldn't possibly have done that."

"On the contrary, Daedalus, I sensed from the moment I saw her that that girl has the most extraordinary depths."

I smiled. "What you sensed, my dear fellow, was a cockstand."

"Be that as it may, it looks like we may need to invite her back for further research."

I sighed resignedly. "If you can keep her unbearable father from coming along, I should be most grateful."

"I assure you that that is very much my intention."

* * * *

Two days later, Victor notified me that Miss Pertwee would be visiting for a further tour of the grounds.

"Alone?" I asked, surprised at his resource.

"I assured the vicar that my patron, the esteemed and wealthy Daedalus Tesla, would be in attendance at all times."

With diligence, we completed several new, more robust Erotometers before the appointed time. We were upstairs in time

to receive our guest, who, removed from her father's baleful penumbra, proved herself to be a reasonably charming young lady, bright and warm of manner, albeit with a sprinkling of freckles about her nose that bespoke an unseemly degree of exposure to sunlight.

After a short time, I excused myself, citing pressing work, and admonished the youths to be on their very best behavior.

In the laboratory, I removed the tele-phone from the hook, having previously taken like measure in the parlour. I pressed my ear to it just in time to hear Victor directing the girl to the seat she had occupied previously. The needle sprang to a position that, in Mrs. Hargreaves (for example), would have denoted the very acme of excitement.

From the earpiece I heard:

"I know that you are Mr. Tesla's assistant, but I do not quite grasp what you assist him at."

"Oh, business. Keeping the books, buying and selling, managing affairs, buying and selling, all that dreadful rubbish."

Eleanor nodded politely. "So then it was you who oversaw the purchase of those three massive steam engines last summer?"

"Oh, yes yes. That was I," he said quite truthfully. I winced, recognizing the trap the cunning little minx had laid. "Quite a lot of bother it was, too. Deuced things were unbelievably expensive."

"But what--?"

"UnbeLIEVably!"

"I'm sure. But what were they for?"

"For...? Oh, oh. Science. Scientific research. Thrilling, terribly modern stuff. Don't really understand it all that well myself. You'll have to ask old Daedalus to explain it to you some time."

The buck, as the Americans say, had been ably passed. It was not a conversation I looked forward to.

"Then he is really doing scientific research? Because..." she paused, and the needle on the Erotometer crept upward.

"Rumor down in town has it that you two are up here rogering each other all the time."

A coughing fit from Victor followed. Apparently she had managed to time her remark to coincide with a mouthful of cake. When he got his breath back, he replied: "Oh, how perfectly ridiculous! I mean, we are, rather, from time to time. You know, when the mood strikes us. But not like that. I mean, I'm as fond of the ladies as the next fellow."

"Are you?" Eleanor said politely.

"Well, not to excess, of course," he appended, laughing nervously. "I mean, moderation in all things, what? I mean, I like some more than others, you know. I mean--dash it all, Miss Pertwee. I mean to say, I find you awfully charming." The needle responded to his confession with another modest gain. Miss Pertwee's output of Vital Fluids was now at approximately three times an ordinary Mathilde Hargreaves orgasm.

Eleanor laughed merrily. "You do have a certain fumbling charm yourself, Mr. Dalrymple," she conceded.

Soft sighs, and the gentle smacking sounds of tentative osculation followed, accompanied by a continued rise in the Erotometer's readings. The dial reached its maximum capacity, and I hastily unscrewed it and attached an even sturdier one I had prepared for such a contingency.

"Mr. Dalrymple," Miss Pertwee gasped after a time, "you take such liberties. Pray continue."

A bit later, Victor spoke: "Oh, Miss Pertwee, you are so lovely. May I call you Eleanor?"

"You may, dear Victor. Tell me: have you copulated with a great many women?"

"Oh, er, I say. That's a rather personal question, isn't it?"

"Yes."

There was a silence.

"Several," he ventured at last.

"That is more than adequate. Might I induce you to initiate me into these mysteries?"

"To... to..."

"Take me, yes."

"Miss Pertwee, wherever did you get such ideas?"

"French novels, of course. I had a school friend with a remarkably extensive collection. And I believe you have permission to address me as Eleanor."

"French novels. Of course," Victor echoed. The needle on the Erotometer was starting to flag a bit.

"I, er... I would be delighted to assist you in such an endeavour," he ventured. "Really, extremely delighted."

"Marvelous," said Eleanor. "The moment I saw you, I thought you might be just the man to instruct me in these matters. I am certain you are not one of those dreary fellows one reads of who demands that their lady friends be in possession of a maidenhead. Mine was taken by a marrow two years ago."

"A marrow, Miss Pertwee? The vegetable that the Italians call *il zucchini*?"

"The very same. A most particularly bold and impetuous hot-house marrow. It was quite the ravishment, I can assure you."

"I consider it no dishonor at all to be preceded by so noble a vegetable. But... er... this is most probably neither the place nor the time. Servants will still be about. Perhaps we can meet at a later hour..."

"Are you certain? I think if you were to pursue the matter now, you might find me quite... receptive."

There was a rustling sound. The meter jumped, but it was Victor who gasped. "Oh lord," he breathed, barely audible through the speaker, "how hot your cunny is."

"Are you certain we haven't time for a brief lesson today? Oh! That does feel quite lovely. I shall--ohhh--still require--aaaah--more extensive training at a--oh my!--later date."

"Well, I suppose a--a brief lesson is unlikely to do any harm. Let us see... could you recline here over this ottoman?"

The Erotometer flagged as Miss Pertwee moved from the centre of the collection field to its perimeter.

"Now let me just raise up these skirts...." Victor said. "What a beautiful bottom you have!"

The needle began to rise again.

"Oh, my," came Eleanor's voice. "What is that lovely smell?"

"Smell? I'm afraid I don't..."

The needle's rise, rather than leveling off, was increasing in rapidity.

"Victor, dear. I find myself quite urgently in need. Pray, pray, do not make me wait."

"Certainly not, my precious dove. Here, do you feel me at your--"

He was interrupted by a piercing shriek from Eleanor. I attempted to adjust the angle of the Erotometer collection trumpet and recoiled, singed by the heat radiating from the device.

"Hush, hush," he urged her anxiously. "There are others about."

Her joyous shrieks subsided somewhat, but did not cease.

"Harder" she called out. "Fuck me--*harummmff!*" Clearly Victor had clamped a hand over her mouth, effectively muffling her screams of delight. My eyes were fixed to the tele-phone in amazement, which proved fortunate a moment later when the Erotometer's dial exploded, showering the back of my head with shards of glass, and producing a sudden silence above.

"What was that?" said Victor.

"It sounded terribly close by," Eleanor said breathlessly.

The muffled sounds of hasty rearrangement ensued, followed by a leave-taking characterized by discomfort and ardour. Anxious to resume their lesson, they arranged to meet for supper in his apartments the very next day. She promised that she would find some way to mollify her father on this point; he promised her an abundance of privacy, and with numerous protestations of eagerness for the following evening, they parted.

* * * *

Scant moments later, I was at the sink, carefully picking shards of glass out of my hair, when the door to the laboratory swung open, and Victor bounded down the steps. "I must have

her!" the two of us said at the same moment.

"I say!" Victor declared. "I won't have you experimenting upon Eleanor like some... crabapple! She is far too delicate and precious a creature for that!"

"And you are far too malleable and sentimental a creature for Science," I retorted. "But have no fear, my friend. I have no interest in experimenting upon her. No, I want her as a source of motive force. I needn't lay hands upon her at all, if it offends your delicate sensibilities so very much."

"Is this another of your jesuitical sophistries, Tesla? If you don't intend to touch her, how to you purpose to extract her Vital Fluids?"

"My dear fellow, she is obviously besotted with you," I said smoothly. "I am certain that if you were to induce her to come down here for you to make love to her, she would positively jump at the notion."

"I suppose.... Besotted, you say? You really think so?"

And a moment later: "Great Scott! What happened to our lovely Erotometer?"

I smiled. "Your delicate and precious creature blasted it to Hades with the force of her lust. I say... which ottoman was it that you bent her over?"

"The black leather one. Why, are you concerned about its hygiene?"

"Simply curious," I said, but my mind was working furiously. The girl had spoken of a marvelous smell, which Victor was entirely unable to detect, just after reclining upon the ottoman and just before her paroxysms of desire became so destructively intense. That ottoman was the favoured resting place of my pets on idle week-end mornings when I was taking in the Sunday Times. It seemed to me entirely possible that the hour of the Geoducks had come at last.

* * * *

Several days later, Victor and Eleanor met once more. They dined, they retired to his chambers, and he initiated her

more fully into the arts of love; they knew the very acme of enjoyment in each other's arms, attaining divine bliss such as few mortals have known, &c. &c. My own attention was elsewhere, as I attempted to modernize and refine the Ontological Engine to accommodate quantities of Vital Fluids that had been hitherto inaccessible. But from my assistant's interminable prattle about it the next day, one would think he had singlehandedly invented sexual intercourse.

"Daedalus," he said to me, "I am in love."

"You are certainly in an elevated state of chemical excitation," I replied. "Do you suppose that your paramour is nearly ready to participate in our project?"

Victor scratched his chin speculatively. "She may very well be," he mused. "She wishes to enact 'The Naughty Schoolgirl and the Strict Headmaster' on Thursday and 'The Abduction of the Sabine Women' on Friday. Perhaps I can propose 'The Mad Doctor and His Crabapple' for Saturday."

"If your strength keeps up," I said. "Wherever did she--?"

"French novels, apparently."

* * * *

Some days later, over breakfast, Victor announced, "Oh, by the way: Eleanor has said that she wishes to better make your acquaintance."

"Whatever for?" I asked.

"I believe she wishes to thank you for your distinctively laissez-faire approach to chaperonage."

"Well, doesn't that rather defeat the purpose? I mean, if my most charming quality is my absence, it seems like paying a call on me can only serve to mitigate it."

"Shall I tell her that you have declined her offer, then?"

"Oh, not at all. I should be delighted to dine with her. You will be joining us, of course?"

"Of course."

* * * *

On the appointed date, however, Victor received a telegram from London. "Damn! Blast! Bugger!" he shouted at it, an expostulation which apparently failed to alter the text in any wise, though the messenger boy who had delivered it did blush.

"I must go to London at once," he announced. "The Daguerreotype Society is receiving its new photo-graphic machine, and if Prichard gets his hands on it, I'll never see the damned thing."

"A brother in your Society is known to be larcenous?"

"Clumsy. He's shattered three cameras beyond repair already this year."

I nodded. "I'll give Miss Pertwee your regrets, then."

Victor looked suspiciously at me. "You will not touch her."

"I am pledged to Knowledge--"

"--as your only bride. Yes, yes. Matrimony is not the prospect that concerns me here. Give me your word, Daedalus."

"You have my word as a gentleman and a scientist, Victor. I shall not lay hands on Miss Pertwee."

"Very well, then. Will you have your driver take me to the rail station in a half-hour?"

As Victor prepared to go, my mind was furiously at work. I would honour my pledge to him, of course. But if my speculations as to the ultimate qualities of the Geoducks was true, my own hands need not be the instrument of Miss Pertwee's ravishment. Victor might be a bit disconcerted at first by my plans, but once he grasped the immeasurable boon to science, I was sure any reservations would be cast aside. Barely had the clattering of hooves announced Victor's departure than I began my preparations.

* * * *

Dinner was a pleasant affair. Miss Pertwee was a lively companion, with an ample supply of light conversation, and a surprisingly sound grasp, for a female, of the sciences. She

displayed a great interest in my tales of clever young cousins Ralph and Nikola, recent emigrants from the Old Country to America, and pressed me for what details of life there could be gleaned from their infrequent letters.

In the sitting room afterward, she acquired a somewhat more serious demeanor. "Mr. Tesla. As I believe you know, your assistant and I have become quite fond of each other. However, he remains quite perplexingly oblique about the work that you do here."

The prospect of explaining my researches, a notion which had hitherto filled me with apprehension, now seemed extremely fortuitous as a means for introducing her to her proposed role in my schemes.

"Are you familiar with the term 'ontology,' Miss Pertwee?"

"It is a concept from theology, is it not? The categories to which things can be assigned."

"Your understanding of its conventional meaning is fair enough, but its use is no longer confined to the dusty tomes of theologians. I myself have made several novel discoveries with regard to the art of manipulating these categories scientifically."

"Manipulating the categories? I'm not at all sure I grasp your meaning. Do you mean using one word to name a thing, rather than another? That hardly sounds like the work of scientists."

"Oh, no," I laughed. "Not the names of the thing, but the actual thing itself. You see, the categories in which we place things are far more malleable than we perceive. Our presumption that a thing is itself and no other is essentially a convenient fiction. Take, er--" I cast about for a suitably neutral example, and my eyes fell upon the tele-phone. "--this tele-phone here. How can we assert with confidence that it is a tele-phone and not, say, a camera?"

Eleanor looked at me with a combination of three parts perplexity and one part mirth.

"Why, because it does not take photographs," she said in the patient tones with which one addresses a nursery child.

I waved this objection aside. "But what if it were to take pictures, what would it be then?"

"A tele-phone... that takes pictures?" She burst into silvery peals of laughter. "Oh, Mr. Tesla, how funny you are!"

With a visible effort, she composed herself, blinking rapidly with her hands folded demurely in her lap. Then she happened to glance once more at the tele-phone, and all was lost. She rolled about on the divan in paroxysms of unrestrained mirth that bordered, to be quite frank, on the unladylike. "You could call it a camera-phone," she fairly shrieked, tears rolling down her face as she howled in delight at her own jape.

Well, this was a bit thick. I'd rather softened towards the girl up to this point, but now I was taking a certain unsavoury pleasure in the prospect of teaching this frivolous creature to respect the power of my Ontological Engine.

"Giggle all you wish, Miss Pertwee," I said, grinding my teeth together. She looked at me quizzically, quietly wiping the tears from her flushed cheeks. "But know that the manipulation of ontological fields is no mere theory. Rather, I have succeeded in harnessing these forces with an engine of my own devising, and have thus twisted the very nature of reality to my own ends."

Thereat, I tugged at a cord that pulled the curtain away from the box that housed my pets. Awakened by the sudden light, they raised their siphons and cast them tentatively about, shaking their wings in a desultory fashion.

"Oh!" Eleanor cried, standing and clasping her hands to her mouth as the creatures rose and began to waddle purposefully towards her. I smiled in grim satisfaction.

"The dear little creatures! Have they names?" she said.

In retrospect, it is clear that I should have realized that their haberdashery did not present the 'ducks in their most formidable aspect. The purposed ravishment appeared, for the time being, well derailed.

Chagrined, I had little choice but to make the introductions. "The largest, in the derby hat, is Hubert." Hubert bowed, and Eleanor squealed in delight.

"The one in the bonnet is Louise." She, too, inclined her

siphon.

"And the smallest, with the drop of fluid at the lip of his siphon, is Dewey, the brightest and most sensitive of the lot." Dewey, for his part, jumped up and down excitedly, and scrambled up onto his favourite ottoman.

"Oh, you dear thing!" Eleanor said. "I shall give you a kiss."

She leaned down to press her lips to Dewey's wrinkled siphon. He angled it upward to approach her. As she came within a couple inches of him, her nostrils flared, and a flushed suffused her face. A rattling behind me unmistakably bespoke the profound agitation of the Erotometer I had arrayed for such a circumstance.

"Oh, my," Eleanor breathed. "What was I--?"

"You were going to give Dewey a kiss," I reminded her gently.

"Oh yes! Of course." Her lips brushed his moist siphon tip; girl and Geoduck each froze in place, trembling. Her cheeks had taken on a great deal of colour now; her mouth slowly opened, and she took the full head of his siphon into her mouth, breathing heavily through her nose.

"Miss Pertwee," I said. She yelped in surprise, and Dewey quacked and flapped his wings as the momentary spell was broken. A glance over my shoulder shewed that the needle on the Erotometer was dropping rapidly as she attempted to compose herself.

"You... you made these creatures yourself?" she asked, anxious, I think, to resume more normal discourse.

"The privilege of creation is one that belongs only to God," I said with laudable humility. "Say rather that I... assembled them, according to certain purposes of my own. Would you care to see the equipment I use for such work?"

"Certainly, certainly. Lead on, Mr. Tesla, and I shall follow."

I led Miss Pertwee down the creaking staircase to my laboratory, the three Geoducks following after her in a neat little line. I pointed out the Categorical Condensers and the Energetic

Eccumulator, and I gave her a brief precis of the functioning of the Vitality Stabilization array.

She seemed yet flushed and a bit abstracted, but she strove mightily to attend to my words. "This is what those steam engines were purchased to power, then?"

"Indeed. There they sit now," I said, gesturing to the sooty tanks, their mighty pistons gathering dust.

"...But they don't seem to be attached to the other equipment..."

"Very astute! I believe I have discovered a superior power source. This equipment here should allow me to harness far greater forces than I have hitherto been able to access. Would you care for a demonstration?"

The Geoducks were milling about our feet, rubbing their siphons against our limbs, apparently sensing, somehow, the events to come. "If it will help me to understand Victor's perplexing secretiveness, I would be most grateful for one," Miss Pertwee said.

"I promise that you will find it most illuminating," I told her, and held out my arm to Dewey. He spread his wings and, flapping them frantically, rose slowly into the air before settling, perched upon my forearm.

"Hold him for me, would you, my dear?" I said, thrusting the Geoduck into her arms, where he immediately began to nuzzle affectionately at her.

"Excellent. Now if you'll just don this circlet here..." I carefully placed the metal ring upon her head. A deep hum arose immediately from the engine, as her prodigious reserves of Vital Fluids began to animate the machinery.

"I... I feel rather faint," she said.

"Here, why don't you sit down." I directed her to the padded bench behind her. Hubert deftly lifted her skirts with his siphon. In a moment he had disappeared from view, his derby rolling away into a corner.

"Oh! Mr. Tesla! Your... your pet! "

"I do believe they like you, Miss Pertwee. That's a very good sign--they are excellent judges of character."

"Can not you retrieve him? He's being--aiee!--being rather rude, I fear." Her hands were still occupied cradling Dewey, who nuzzled most warmly at her cheeks. She shifted about in a most agitated fashion, but her legs remained parted.

I shook my head sadly. "I am afraid not. I made a solemn promise to Victor not to touch you."

"But he is--*ummf!*" Whatever liberties Hubert was taking with her lower parts went unreported as Dewey's siphon found her parted lips and slid within.

Beside us, the humming rose in volume and pitch. Eleanor's muffled cries gave way to moaning as she suckled at Dewey's formidable siphon, drawing forth more fluid of love, which she swallowed with apparent relish.

She reclined further and released Dewey, who now stood upon her heaving bosom, thrusting his siphon slowly between the young lady's inviting lips and gurgling with delight. Her feet left the ground and her skirts fell about her waist, revealing a tableau of unforgettable lasciviousness. Her stockings ended just above her well-shaped calves; bare creamy thighs then rose, joining at a plump and well-furred motte that failed utterly to cover the prominent labia minora that glistened seductively beneath. Hubert nuzzled eagerly at that apex, apparently uncertain how to proceed with his object of desire.

Never fear, Hubert. Abler hands are prepared to assist you.

Blindly, Eleanor groped beneath her waist, until one delicate hand closed upon his siphon. He squawked at the force of her grip, but then his sighs of pleasure joined her own groans as she rubbed his tip along her opening. Geoduck and human anticipatory fluid commingled, forming strands that connected their dueling organs of pleasure. Hubert clambered onto the bench, his new position affording him vastly superior purchase. Then, with a tug of Eleanor's wrist, he was within her. Her stifled rhythmic cries drew my attention to her mouth once more, where Dewey, astoundingly, was buried nearly to his shoulders, flapping his wings wildly for balance as he thrust into her throat.

As I watched, he shuddered and twitched, feathers flying

through the close air of the laboratory. Eleanor gulped and sputtered as he spent deep within her throat. Then, inch by inch by inch, Dewey's sated siphon withdrew until only the tip was brushing Eleanor's lips. Tenderly he kissed her lips, her cheeks, her forehead, before rolling over onto his back beside her head, as limp as a corpse.

In that moment's respite I realized: these fascinating proceedings, revealing as they did facets of the character of my pets on which I had previously only been able to speculate, had for a time blinded me to my primary work. The Ontological Engine stood, humming and crackling with the vast forces flowing into it, and I had neglected to place anything upon the work-table for it to alter!

Frantically, I looked about the laboratory for some suitable object. Thus far, I had been able permanently to affect only living things, or parts freshly plucked from some living creature. It was entirely possible that, with the energies available to me now, that barrier would crumble. On the other hand, what a tragedy it would be if some inert object rendered the entire ambitious experiment useless! My eyes fell upon Dewey, still prone upon the Collection Stand, gurgling and twitching happily. Could a product of previous ontological manipulation be altered once more? Certainly it was an intriguing question, ripe to be tested.

It was the work of a moment to spring to the Collection Stand and gently lift Dewey from it. At first, he cooed and nuzzled against me, but as I approached the very work-table where I had created him, he grew agitated, spreading his wings and kicking at me with his webbed feet as I attempted to place him where the beams would shortly be falling. I seized a disused birdcage from a corner of the room and hastily thrust the now-frantic creature within, shutting the door behind him. Hastily I positioned the rocking, loudly-protesting package upon the table and dashed to the controls.

I returned my attention to the Collection Stand and found that Eleanor was well advanced in the throes of pleasure, her brow knit, her face darkly flushed as she neared what promised

to be the first climax of many. Every minute or two Hubert would withdraw the shining, wrinkled length of his siphon to draw a quick gasping breath, Eleanor's well-used nether parts receiving no time to recover from his formidable girth before being distended once more.

There was no time to waste. I activated the Engine, and the blue glow came rushing out of the collectors in a veritable torrent, suffusing the work-table with a near-blinding radiance. At once, foot-tall vortices of light eddied away, illuminating every corner of my basement laboratory, until they burst with audible cracks upon the damp stone walls. Nearby, Eleanor's legs kicked in the air as her hands scrabbled for purchase at the sides of the bench and she screamed at the apex of her enjoyment.

Hubert, it seems, was a more considerate lover than I might have given him credit for. He paused in his thrusting to accommodate his partner's aftermath, grinding his shoulders in slow circles against Eleanor's swollen mound. As she panted, the radiance continued flowing from the Ontological Engine onto the still-rocking cage on the work-table, the metal of the cage sending forth an answering glow that obscured whatever was transpiring within. One of the vortices of ontological force that broke loose from the Engine brushed Hubert, his gleaming siphon still resting within Eleanor's interior, and a single magnificent pea-cock feather sprouted from his posterior.

In this interval of relative calm, her eyes met mine. "Oh, Mr. Tesla! Your pets are a marvel! But tell me, I pray--might they do me an injury?"

"An injury?" I inquired.

"If they spend inside me... is there any chance of... harm?"

"Oh! You are afraid of them impregnating you. Rest assured, my dear, your ova and Geoduck spermatozoa are entirely incompatible."

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Tesla. That is a great comfort to me. But... wouldn't you like to join in our festivities here? I'm sure you have a very handsome prick, and--" here she looked down at

the front of my trousers "--I can see that it must be giving you terrible discomfort."

"You are very kind, Miss Pertwee, but I am pledged to Knowledge as my only bride."

But no answer was forthcoming, for Hubert had resumed his vigorous thrusts, and she was entirely preoccupied with the sensations she was experiencing.

This time, Hubert was able to join Eleanor, his webbed feet scrabbling at her milky thighs, leaving faint crisscrossed pink welts across them as he shuddered within her. Eleanor bit down upon the knuckles of one hand, the other cradling Hubert's shell between her lofted legs. The surge in ontological energies produced created another crop of crackling vortices. I saw one strike the collection stand, where a tiny palm tree sprouted from the wood, laden with gooseberry-sized cocoanuts.

When their mutual climax had subsided, Hubert crawled up Eleanor's panting body to lie, similarly spent, where his brother had rested, his one over-sized tail-feather extending past Eleanor's knees.

"My goodness," Eleanor said when she could again speak. "That was quite extraordinary." The radiance from the Engine began to subside, the unearthly hum to soften. I clenched my fists in frustration. Too soon! I was certain that this woman could give forth more Vital Fluids, if only my agents were equal to the task. A moment later, there was a great fluttering of wings, and Louise settled herself between Eleanor's yet-widespread thighs.

"It would appear that your ordeal may not yet be over." I said, relieved. "Louise would seem to be manifesting some Sapphic tendencies." Now, indeed, it was her turn to snuffle about Eleanor's red and dilated orifice, running as it was with her brother's spend, which she proceeded to slurp up with all apparent relish, while Eleanor began once again to moan at the pleasant friction thus produced.

"Oh, dear, dear Louise," she moaned, "do please fuck me. I find myself still very much in need." Eagerly Louise complied, pressing the tip of her siphon to Eleanor's opening and working

it, by steady increments, inside. As I stood watching this coupling, a most perverse idea came to me, which stood an excellent chance of increasing the girl's Vital Fluid output still further, if such a thing was possible. I left the control panel for a moment and made certain preparations for my scheme. Then I crouched by the recumbent young lady and spoke thus into her ear:

"By the way, Eleanor, do you happen to know anything about bivalve reproduction?"

Unable to gather breath or thought sufficient for speech now that the erotic frenzy was once more upon her, she shook her head mutely.

"It's really quite an interesting subject," I said. "You see, as you've had occasion to note, most male siphon-clams spurt their seed forth from their siphons, leaving their sperm to adventure, willy-nilly through the seas, in quest of their female counterparts. That much is unsurprising.

"What you may find more noteworthy is that the females, by and large, expend their fluid of generation in precisely the same manner." Her eyes came unfocused. I was losing her attention--I had to get to the point.

"That is to say, the female expends her ova through her siphon as well, in the hopes that the sperm and eggs may come together in a suitably congenial environment for them to grow."

Her brow was furrowing further--she was beginning to suspect my meaning. "...and I very much fear," I continued, "that your tender young womb may prove to be just such an environment." Behind me, the pitch of the Ontological Engine rose to a frightening whine. The radiance cast was as stark as at the moment of a lightning-strike. The little strumpet was excited by the idea!

Her eyes, however, widened in dismay. "Oh lord! What shall I do, Mr. Tesla?"

"Well, you could always try asking Louise to stop."

She gathered her breath. "Louise! Louise, darling, I... I..." She sobbed in frustration. "Oh, it feels so exquisitely lovely, I somehow can't bear to have her stop, howsoever much I might

wish it!"

I nodded sympathetically. "If you could induce her to spend elsewhere, I should think there would be no danger in that. But of course, it would have to be somewhere where neither of her brothers had ejaculated."

She blinked at me in perplexity.

"Try inviting her to penetrate your bottom."

She gaped in astonishment. "That's impossible!" she exclaimed.

"Not at all. In fact, I think you will find that it can be a source of quite remarkable pleasure. Here, raise your legs a bit further, and I will give you a taste of the joys to be thus gained."

Obediently, she brought her limbs up, hooking her arms under her knees and thus exposing the exquisitely pretty little pink knot between the cheeks of her bottom.

Already I had in my hand a slender metal dildo, anointed with pomade. I wriggled it against her bottom-hole for a moment, allowing her to accustom herself to the sensation. Oh, her howls when I slowly pressed the object into her! Were they of delight or dismay? I was beyond certainty, beyond caring. The whine behind me rose in pitch once more, now accompanied by a rattling noise unmistakable even through the rest of the din.

"Say it, Eleanor," I demanded, my hand working the dildo steadily into her. "Tell Louise what you desire."

"Oh!" she cried out. "Take my bottom-hole, Louise!"

There was a moment's hesitation, then Louise extracted her siphon from Eleanor's slick cunny and cocked it as if listening.

"Go on," I urged her.

"I want to feel your great affair spend in my bottom, Louise!" Eleanor cried, squirming her hips in a way that lent powerful credence to her words. "Please, bugger my arse-hole!"

By this time the dildo had vacated Eleanor's rear passage. Louise wasted no time in pressing her siphon against Eleanor's tiny orifice, pressing within with a patience and consideration that appeared only to inflame Eleanor, who rocked her hips impatiently against the massive tool, her fingers

working frantically on her inflamed clitoris.

In time, the defenses of Eleanor's sphincter were breached, and the great blunt head of Louise's siphon passed within, accompanied by a veritable symphony of shrieking from Eleanor.

I stood by the side of the bench, surveying this thrilling tableau.

"More," Eleanor was moaning deliriously. "Need more..."

One of her flailing hands struck the front of my breeches and grasped my rigid member with spasmodic force. With the strength of one possessed, she tore my breeches open. "Miss Pertwee!" I started to object, but already she had risen on her elbows and taken my cock into her hot mouth.

Vaguely I remembered the words of my oath to Victor, and clenched my hands at my sides, refusing to lay hands on my ravisher.

She drew back to look at me with great beseeching eyes, my cock still firmly gripped in her hand. "Please, Mr. Tesla, I beg of you--fuck me? I long to have this handsome great prick in my poor hungry cunny--I think I shall die without it!"

Well, I reasoned, a momentary penetration could do no harm, so long as I avoided ejaculation. Hastily, I pulled off my boots and breeches and straddled Louise, who was by this point working furiously in Eleanor's bottom.

The liquid heat and compression of Eleanor's cunt was exquisite. I almost lost control of myself at that moment, but decades of stern self-discipline asserted themselves, and I held myself still until the fit had passed. Then, just as self-restraint had begun to assert itself, the vixen locked her legs about my waist and began to undulate in a most stimulating manner.

"Miss Pertwee, I shall spend!" I cried in dismay.

"Yes, yes!" she answered "Spend in me, both of you!" I heard a terrible crackling behind me, but I was powerless in Eleanor's grip and in the rush of emotions and sensations that overwhelmed me. A wash of sensation such as I have never known came over me, shaking my brains in my head like dice in

a cup as I shuddered and pounded atop Eleanor's spread legs. Eleanor's shrieks crescendoed once more, her nails digging painfully into my bottom. I heard a great tumultuous noise, as of a mighty cataract roaring off a cliff. I opened my eyes just in time to see a huge vortex of ontological energies, quite four feet in height, hurling towards me. There was a massive roar, an intolerably bright blue glow, and a rush of heat.

* * * *

I found myself on the laboratory floor and attempted to stagger to my feet, but found my perspective oddly skewed, as if the entire room had vastly increased in size. My Ontological Engine was in shambles, pieces scattered about the laboratory. The cage, thrown from the upended work-table, was burst asunder, an iron blossom whose skeletal blackened petals reached outward in every direction.

Miss Pertwee lay upon her back on the Collection Stand, a beatific smile upon her face, her skirts still bunched chaotically about her waist. The stand itself was a riot of blossoms of all manner of shapes, sizes, and colours.

Over me now crouched an unfamiliar youth, entirely nude, slender and angelic of aspect, gold ringlets falling about a gentle face that was contorted into a look of deep concern.

"Uncle," said the boy, "is that you?"

"Young man, I do not believe I have your acquaintance," I said. Or intended to, but only an inchoate gurgling reached my ears.

"Uncle Daedalus?" he persisted. "It is I, Dewey! I was so terribly afraid, but I should have known that you would only have my best interests at heart! This is a wonderful gift you have given me!"

A terrible suspicion rose in me. I raised my hands to my face, or so I intended. Instead two feathered wings met my horrified gaze.

I recall little of the subsequent hours. When Victor returned from London the following morning, I suspect that

Eleanor's precis of the night's events may have omitted certain unnecessary details of what had transpired. I likewise suspect that what narrative she did not provide, conjecture filled in amply enough. That afternoon there was a council of war. Eleanor, Victor, Dewey (now garbed in my own clothes, which fit him well enough), Hubert, Louise, and myself all met in my study to devise a course of action.

"Daedalus," said Victor, "I am not well pleased. I suspect that you did not honour the spirit of your pledge to me, and I am certain that you took reckless and imprudent risks with more than one innocent soul entrusted into your care."

Well, this was a fine situation! There my so-called protégé, who had abandoned me when I needed him most, stood, with all his parts and functions intact, scolding me--I, who had lost all in selfless pursuit of Science. I let him know, in no uncertain terms, of my own assessment of his loyalty, his competence, his moral fibre, his intellect, and his likely ancestry. It was only after several minutes of this forceful rebuke that I calmed down enough to realize that only squawks and gurgles were emerging as I flapped my wings furiously, and I lapsed into mortified silence.

Dewey cleared his throat. "Uncle Daedalus says that he is very sorry for the hurt that his reckless actions have caused, and is very eager to make amends in whatever ways remain in his power. He adds that his sole intent was to allow me to walk among you in the form you see now and that he hopes that the nobility of his goals can, in some small way, mitigate the imprudence of his methods." He looked at me with an utterly unreadable expression. "Isn't that right, Uncle?"

There was a moment's hesitation. Then I nodded.

* * * *

Little remains to be told. Two days of penmanship practice sufficed to allow me to take pen in siphon and produce a document leaving, in the event of my unexpected disappearance, my estate in the trusteeship of Mr. Dalrymple, pending my

eventual return.

Victor has turned his hand to rebuilding the Ontological Engine, though work proceeds slowly due to my limited capacity for mechanical labor. However, my improved design should guard in the future against such a transfer of ontological status from one subject to another as happened that fateful night. Dewey shows significant potential in his grasp of ontological theory and is already an asset in the laboratory--I confess myself quite proud of him.

Victor and Eleanor are engaged to be married. Signs of a possible pending blessed event make an imminent ceremony desirable. After some weeks of quiet discussion, Victor and Eleanor decided to invite Dewey, Hubert, and Louise to join them in Victor's apartments, where the shouts and quacks of delight often extend until the cock's crow. A like offer was extended to myself, but I was of course was forced to decline. Despite the monstrous pressures this form exerts upon my libido, the experiences of that night have served only to remind me of the necessity of celibacy for the truly first-rate scientific mind, and the dire consequences of any lapse.

About the Author

Vinnie Tesla has worked (or at least drawn a paycheck) as a whitewater guide, information architect, bicycle deliveryman (by, not of), porn video reviewer, and desktop publisher.

His purchase, in adolescence, of a mass-market paperback of *The Pearl* was undoubtedly the pivotal event that turned him towards his calling as a fake Victorian pornographer. His subsequent internship at Circlet Press was just the icing on the cake.

An omnibus volume containing the current tale and two sequels, *The Erotofluidic Age*, is available from Circlet as both an [ebook](#) and a [handsome paperback](#).

His high fantasy novella *Ota Discovers Fire* is also available from Circlet.



He has a bunch of free fiction online at vinnietesla.com/stories, including "Victim/Victorian," the pornographic novella to which *The Ontological Engine* is a prequel.

He lives in Medford, Massachusetts with his spousalbeast and an elderly schnauzer.

The Ontological Engine is also available as an audiobook, read by the author, at Audible.com.

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